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# Farm Broadcasters Letter



Letter No. 2212

May 9, 1985

U.S. & CANADA  
FARM TRADE  
MEETING

Sec'y of Agriculture John Block and Canadian Ag. Minister John Wise agree on several agricultural trade and policy matters at a meeting on May 8. The major items of agreement included:  
--Intensify joint efforts on improving agricultural trade relations by encouraging the formation of a U.S.-Canadian horticultural industry advisory group to identify the facts and to recommend ways of reducing trade frictions.  
--A joint commitment to fairer trade and to do what is necessary to improve market access, to reduce trade distortions such as export subsidies, to reestablish and improve balance of rights and obligations as regards international trade and to pursue these objectives through the GATT committee and later through multilateral trade negotiations.

MEAT PROD.  
IN SECOND-HALF

Total red meat and poultry production was record-large in the first quarter, resulting in lower livestock and poultry prices, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. A slowdown in economic growth also helped hold down meat prices. Broiler production rose more than 4 pct. from a year earlier, while turkey output advanced 12 pct. Cattle and hog slaughter declined 3 and 4 pct., respectively. However, favorable winter weather and a slower marketing pace resulted in the heaviest cattle and hog slaughter weights since the early 1980's. Consequently, beef production was unchanged and pork output declined 3 pct.

HOG PRODUCTION  
MAY DROP  
IN FALL

Hog producers show no signs of expansion, thus production is expected to reflect herd reductions of the past year, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Production may drop about 2 pct. this spring, but be slightly above a year ago this summer. The largest year-to-year declines are likely this fall.

BEEF PROD.  
TO DECLINE  
IN SECOND HALF

Beef production is expected to remain near the large levels of first-half 1984 before declining fairly sharply in the second half, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Sharply lower nonfed slaughter will account for nearly all the decline in second-half beef production.

U.S.-SPAIN  
RESEARCH  
PROJECTS

The U.S.-Spain Joint Committee for Scientific and Technological Cooperation has approved 12 new research projects on agricultural problems that are common to both countries. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the projects are funded at \$1.7 million by the U.S.-Spain Joint Committee.

FLORIDA  
MEDFLY  
OUTBREAK

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has established emergency regulations to restrict interstate movement of 84 kinds of produce and plants from the Miami area to prevent the spread of Mediterranean fruit flies. The regulated area consists of about 90 square miles in Dade County, north of Miami. Regulated items include tomatoes, peppers, apples, apricots, avocados, oranges, lemons, cherries, grapes, grapefruit, mangoes, peaches, pears and many other kinds of fruits, nuts, berries, vegetables and ornamental plants.

EUROPE'S AG  
PRODUCTION

Western Europe's agricultural production likely will decline in 1985 from the 1984 record, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Crop production probably will drop significantly. The grain harvest is forecast down from last year's mammoth crop, though it may still be the second largest on record. Except for milk, production of most livestock products may rise slightly.

U.S. EXPORTS  
TO EUROPE

U.S. agricultural exports to Western Europe declined in 1984 for the third straight year to \$8.8 billion, the lowest since 1977, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Increasing agricultural self-sufficiency reduced European import needs and the strong dollar eroded the U.S. share of the declining European market. Exports of most major commodities declined to both EC and non-EC countries. Oilseeds and grains, the major U.S. exports, declined significantly.

EGYPT  
TO IMPORT  
MORE SOYBEANS

Egypt's unsuccessful attempt to increase oilseed production significantly has left new soybean crushing plants idle, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. To alleviate the pressures of excess oilseed crushing capacity, Egypt began to increase soybean imports substantially in early 1985. Most of the imports are expected to come from the United States. The U.S. agricultural counselor in Cairo forecasts the 1985/86 soybean imports at 175,000 tons, compared with this year's estimate of 150,000 tons.

DROUGHT IN  
NEW ZEALAND

Near-drought conditions exist in the eastern region of both islands in New Zealand, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Rain is urgently needed before the onset of winter weather when pasture growth slows. Winter feed reserves are being fed on many farms. The dry areas hold one-third of the cattle and most of the sheep. The drought has caused both sheep land cattle slaughter to increase and carcass weight to fall. Sheep carcass weights are also lower due to higher prices being paid for lean lambs.

CONSUMERS TO  
SPEND MORE  
FOR FARM FOODS

Consumers are expected to spend 4 to 6 pct. more for domestic farm foods in 1985, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Their expenditures will rise because of slightly higher per capita food consumption, an increase in the U.S. population, and small increases in retail food prices. The rise in retail prices is expected to account for 2 to 5 pct. of the increase; population growth, about 1 pct.; and per capita consumption, about 0.5 pct., after falling in 1984.

FROM OUR  
TELEVISION  
SERVICE

"European Community"...USDA economist Ron Trostle talks about some of the factors contributing to the decrease of U.S. sales to the European Community. Vic Powell interviews. (376)

"Conservation Tillage Practices"...Dr. Bob Bohannon, with USDA's Extension Service, focuses on the advantages of conservation tillage practices as opposed to conventional methods. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (377)

"Trade Show Boosts Exports"...Robert Mannion, with USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, talks about the benefits of the National Food and Agriculture Exposition in Kansas City to promote and sell farm products. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (378)

"Infrared Fire Detection"...William Barrus, USDA infrared operations specialist, talks about research in Boise, Idaho to detect forest fires through infrared fire detection systems. Vic Powell interviews. (379)

"Soil Erosion Research"...Kent Mitchell, agricultural engineer with the University of Illinois, describes research work by scientists to study soil erosion and its affects on the land. Gary Beaumont interviews. (380)

PRICE SUPPORT  
FOR 1985-CROP  
TOBACCO

To obtain price support on 1985-crop, Virginia fire-cured - type 21 - and sun-cured - type 37 - tobaccos, producers must agree to pay assessments on all marketings for deposit into no-net-cost accounts, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The assessments are 10 cents per pound for fire-cured and 3 cents per pound for sun-cured tobacco. Producers who elect not to pay will not be eligible for price support loans on their 1985 crops. They will also be subject to a penalty equal to 75 pct. of the 1984 average market price.

PROPOSAL TO  
BAR MEAT

Bulgaria, Colombia and Luxembourg will lose eligibility to export meat products to the U.S. if a proposal made by the U.S. Department of Agriculture takes effect later this year. Colombia and Luxembourg requested removal from the list of eligible countries, and Bulgaria did not respond, indicating no interest in export eligibility. Comments on the proposal may be made to: Regulations Office, Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA, Room 2641 South, Washington, D.C.

ENROLLMENT IN  
COTTON PROGRAM

U.S. cotton farmers have enrolled 83 pct. of their base acreage in the 1985 cotton program, up from 71 pct. in 1984, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Higher participation reflects increased supplies and lower prices this year, along with the outlook for continuing large supplies in relation to demand. The heavy signup also suggests producer plans have changed, and planted acreage may not reach the 11 million indicated as of Feb. 1. With average yields, cotton supplies in 1985/86 should be more than adequate for mill use and exports.



OFF MIKE

We hear by the grapevine that the NAFB Northcentral Regional meeting, May 2-4 in Sioux Falls, SD, was supergood and that Tom Steever (KS00, Sioux Falls, SD) North Central NAFB Vice President, did himself proud in putting together an excellent program. Registration was good (Tom's estimate was 120-130). Our sources also report that Rod Johnson (KDHL, Faribault, MN) is the newly elected NAFB vice president for the region. Normally the regional meeting is held where the VP is, but next year will be different in that the regional meeting will be held in Des Moines, IA ... Speaking of regional meetings, by the time you read this, the South Central NAFB meeting in Little Rock, AR, will be history. We will be attending and are looking forward to visiting Little Rock for the first time. And, if you know John Philpot (Agri Radio Net, LR, AR) at all, you know it will be an interesting meeting. We'll report on it next week ... Wayne Jenkins (Ag Day, Indianapolis, IN) was in England recently, not as part of an agriculture tour but at an international chorus competition. The Americans were not in competition, and only performed as guests. But Wayne's barbershop quartet, the "Floor Flushers" proved to be a hit (Wayne's modest comment was: "We tore them up."). Must have. They kept the quartet on stage for an hour. Now that's a compliment!! ... A couple "people moves" in case you missed them in the NAFB newsletter CHATS: Tom Lyon has left KXRB in Sioux Falls, SD, and is in Boulder, CO, doing public relations work. Donna Schmidt, who was with Sherry Newell at WJON/WWJO, St. Cloud, MN, moved over to take Tom's place.

FROM OUR RADIO  
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1458...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) What does the changing structure of American agriculture mean for the moderate-sized family farm? Gary Crawford talks with the coordinator of a new study that says mid-sized farms as a sole source of family income may be in deeper trouble than most people think.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1447...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; Another round of Canadian/U.S. talks; A grim grain outlook; New soft drink formula has corn farmers smiling; Wheat referendum/proposed price support system.

CONSUMER TIME #940...(Weekly reel of five 2½-3 min features) Intensive gardening; Over-ambitious gardeners; Wedding gown care; Lower vegetable prices?; Authorities try new technique to save fruit from fruit flies.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Wed, May 15, Milk production report; Thurs, May 16, Feed situation and outlook; Fri, May 17, Agricultural outlook report; Mon, May 20, Wheat situation report; Tues, May 21, Catfish production, Farm labor report, Outlook for oil crops, Crop and weather update; Wed, May 22, Export outlook; Thurs, May 23, Poultry production report. Dial the USDA National News Line 202/488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. EDT each working day.



JAMES L. JOHNSON, Chief  
Radio and Television Division